INTRODUCTION

Fritz Meier (1912-1998) was born in the distinguished old Swiss university city of Basle and grew up in the nearby village of Gelterkinden. Apart from a stint of teaching in Alexandria and numerous visits to Turkey and the Middle East, throughout his adult life Basle remained his home. In the 1930s he studied directly under the Swiss orientalist Rudolf Tschudi (1884-1960) and at this time also met Hellmut Ritter\(^1\) who was by then living and working in Istanbul, and came under his shaping influence. The obituaries Meier wrote on both these scholars, which are reprinted in *Bausteine*, besides sketching their intellectual development and contribution to oriental studies, give an interesting indication of Meier’s own scholarly orientation during his formative years. In several of his writings Meier thanks Ritter for having suggested a particular study project and drawn his attention to primary source materials — for example the manuscript which formed the basis of Meier’s text edition of the *Firdaws al-murshidiyya* which was to be his doctoral dissertation.

During his long and productive lifetime Meier’s academic interests revolved around two principal areas of research: Persian poetry and Sufism, the latter in both its Arabic and its Persian manifestations. Besides the two volumes of his selected articles referred to in the Preface, he published six sizeable books, five of which deal with major themes and personalities of Sufism. Already in his dissertation, *Die Vita des Scheich Abū Ishāq al-Kāzarūnī*,\(^2\) Meier displays his striking originality and personal talents. His edition of the Persian text is a very competent application of philological methods. In his introduction, written in a lucid, intelligent German, he offers a model analysis of the Persian text as well as other medieval sources which throw light on the authorship and manner of the work’s composition. Most

\(^{1}\) Ritter’s writings are listed by E.A. Gruber in *Oriens* 18-19 (1965-66), pp. 5-32. Perhaps his most ambitious and best known work is *Das meer der seele. Mensch, welt und Gott in den geschichten des Fariduddin ‘Aṭṭār*, Leiden, 1955.

\(^{2}\) *Die Vita des Scheich Abū Ishāq al-Kāzarūnī*, Leipzig, 1948, is a critical edition of the *Firdaws al-murshidiyya*. Mahmūd b. ‘Uthmān’s Persian reworking of a lost late-11th-century Arabic original. This Persian version of the life of Kāzarūnī (d. 1035) was composed in 1327.
impressive is the way Meier describes Kāzarūnī's pattern of life in the context of different currents of Sufi thought, his stance vis-à-vis dogmatic issues, and what is known of the early history of the Sufi order he founded. The precision and sureness of his observations set a high intellectual standard. It is interesting to note that Meier was only twenty-four years old when he presented his dissertation to the University of Basle.³

Between his work on Kāzarūnī and the publication of his second monograph, *Die Fawāʾīḥ al-ḡamāl* of Najm al-Dīn al-Kubrā, twenty years elapsed, during which time Meier was chiefly occupied with Persian poetry. The result of this period is his book on the Persian poetess Mahsati which appeared in 1963.⁴ This work delves into what is known about the origin and early development of thequatrain in Persian. Meier collects 279 poems (257 quatrains) attributed by different sources to Mahsati, translates them and offers a detailed philological commentary on the text. — As for the *Fawāʾīḥ*, like the *vita* of Kāzarūnī, it consists of an edition of the text, in this case in Arabic, and an introduction. Here, however, the introduction is 252 pages and offers an extensive treatment of the subject. Indeed, the book has remained the authoritative work on Kubrā and his teachings, as well as on his Sufi order, the Kubrawiyya. Meier's introduction shows that in addition to being knowledgeable on relevant Islamic literature, he is familiar with a wide range of disciplines that lie further afield: Classical Antiquity, the Christian West, and in particular the methods and perspectives of Jungian psychoanalysis.

Meier's next monograph was devoted to the Sufi master from Mayhana, Shaykh Abū Saʿīd-i Abū'L-Khayr (967-1049),⁶ who had already been studied by the earlier renowned scholars,

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³ Meier presented his dissertation to the University of Basle in 1936, though due to various technical problems and delays it was not finally published in book form until 1948.

⁴ *Die schöne Mahsati. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des persischen Vierzeilers*, Wiesbaden, 1963. This work is a revised form of Meier's *Habilitationsschrift* presented to the University of Basle in 1941. See Jan Rypka's enthusiastic review in *Oriens* XVII (1964), pp. 259-63.


Reynold Nicholson and Hellmut Ritter. This work, which Meier himself referred to as a bible of Sufism, is a discursive presentation of the subject, without a text edition. The distinctive characteristics of Shaykh Abū Saʿīd: his conversion to the Sufi path, early ascetic feats, his notorious antinomian behavior, overriding cheerfulness, etc., are carefully analyzed and compared with the currents of thought and religious attitudes of his predecessors and contemporaries. Around the person of Abū Saʿīd a wide spectrum of subsidiary subjects are dealt with concerning customs, social practices and the historical development of ideas in Sufism. One should read the book in small doses, focusing on separate subsections at a time that are often excellent, self-contained excursions on fundamental aspects of Sufism.

Another of Meier's books is devoted to Bahāʾ-ʾi Walad (d. 1231), the father of Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, and appeared in 1989. Here on the basis of Bahāʾʾs diaries, the Maʿārif, large parts of which are skilfully translated into German, Meier sketches the portrait of what in many respects represents a quite unique form of mysticism. Bahāʾ never refers to himself as a Sufi, and though he was a contemporary of Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, Bahāʾ is not directly influenced by the latter's thought. Meier's book is also an essential work for the further study of the

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8 In Et2, s.v. Abū Saʿīd Faḍḥ Allāh b. Abī I-Khayr.
9 The primary source for the life of Abū Saʿīd is the Asrār al-tawḥīd fi maqāmāt al-shaykh Abī Saʿīd compiled by Muhammad b. Munawwar. In his references Meier cites the two text editions that existed at the time he was writing, that of V. Zhukovski (1899) and Dh. Safā (1953). A third improved edition was published in 1987 by Shafiʿi-Kadkani which forms the basis of the English translation by John O’Kane, The Secrets of God’s Mystical Oneness, Costa Mesa-New York, 1992.
10 For instance, one might single out for special attention: Chapter 1 which presents a sweeping sketch of the diversity of spiritual approaches adopted by different Sufi personalities; Chapter 9 on Yahyā b. Muʿādh al-Rāzī, an early example of the cheerful Sufi in whom hope predominates; Chapter 13 dealing with Sufi forms of association and hospices or convents; Chapter 20 on the marabout family; and Chapter 21 on the theme of 'cheerfulness' in later Sufi orders.
celebrated son, Jalāl al-Dīn-i Rūmī, on the basis of whose teachings the Mawlawiyya Sufi order was founded.

The last of Meier’s larger studies deals with two topics in connection with the Naqshbandiyya: rābiṭa and taṣarruf. Meier examines the methods developed by the Naqshbandiyya to create a bond (rābiṭa) of love and devotion between the Sufi master and the novice. The novice, for example, learns a technique for inwardly visualizing the shaykh’s face in order to achieve fanā’ ‘self-annihilation’, first in the spiritual master and then ultimately in God. The faculty of taṣarruf in a shaykh refers to the virtually magic power which he is capable of exercising simply through mental concentration. He can change his appearance, thwart someone’s path, induce sickness in his enemies and even cause their death. In this study Meier draws on his broad knowledge of all periods of Sufism as well as relevant Naqshbandi sources from earliest times (14th century) up to the present.

It is not easy to describe adequately the salient features of Meier’s scholarly approach. Generally, he succeeds in achieving a high degree of analytical clarity. His German can be very precise, nuanced and sophisticated, in extreme cases almost eccentric in its precision. He does not duck difficulties. On the contrary, when searching for definitions or classifying phenomena with different meanings in different contexts, he tends to present a survey of gradated shades of meaning (see his treatment of dhikr in ‘The Dervish Dance’). He is capable of disentangling thorny theological ideas and following up their religious implications as in the case of Ibn Taymiyya’s complicated position on predestination. Similarly, he can trace the development of a major religious concept or institution such as the shaykh al-tarbiya in Nayshābūr on the basis of an original analysis of contemporary sources (see ‘Khurāsān and the End of Classical Sufism’). In his long essay on the Almoravids, he brings to bear his specialist knowledge of mystics and holy men as social mediators and ideologists to offer his own synthetic interpretation of the origins of a major movement of military expansion. In his essay on Suyūṭi’s explanations about Muhammad’s whereabouts and activities after death, Meier displays his talent for surveying and organizing sets of ideas and their variations over time. In all these cases the greater part of his work consists of original research. For this purpose he makes use of an exceptional variety of Arabic and Persian primary sources,

including historical writings, hagiography, medieval technical manuals on Sufism, inscriptions, biographical dictionaries, poetry and theological works. Throughout he employs a philological method which lets the textual source speak for itself by appropriate quotation and accurate translation.

As for Meier’s students who have gone on to do distinguished work in the field of oriental studies, they are numerous. One may mention Rudolf Mach, Benedikt Reinert, Hermann Landolt (who also studied with Henry Corbin), Karl Teufel, Hartwig Cordt, Edward Badeen and Gudrun Schubert. Likewise, Bernd Radtke, the editor and organizer of the present translation of selected articles was also a student and close friend of Meier. Over the years he has written on al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī. Most recently, together with myself, he has published an English translation of Tirmidhī’s chief work, the Sirat al-awliyyā’, along with the latter’s autobiography, under the title The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism. He has also written numerous articles to do with Sufism in the eighteenth century which, among other things, challenge received notions about ‘Neo-Sufism’.


15 Hermann Landolt, Le révélateur des mystères, Paris, 1986. This is a text edition of a work by the Kubrawī shaykh Isfarāyīnī, accompanied by a partial translation and commentary.


17 Hartwig Cordt, Die sitzungen des ‘Ala‘ ad-dawla as-Sinnānī, Zurich, 1977. This is Cordt’s dissertation which is a study of the Chihil majlīs, a Persian work about the Kubrawī ‘Ala‘ al-Dawla-i Sinnānī.


21 For a fuller bibliography on Radtke see his pioneering article ‘Sufism in the Eighteenth Century: An Attempt at a Provisional Appraisal’, in Die Welt des Islams XXXVI, 1996, pp. 326-64.
The most prolific of Meier’s former students, however, is without a doubt Richard Gramlich. Gramlich’s first work of importance was a three-volume study of the Sufi orders of Persia in modern times. This fundamental work, which has not received the attention it deserves outside the German-speaking world, is something of a general reference book on Sufism, especially the second volume which gives a detailed description of the teachings of the various orders. Gramlich then set out to translate the primary medieval handbooks of classical Sufism. He began with the ‘Awārif al-ma‘ārif of Abū Ḥāfṣ al-Suhrawardi. This was followed by the last part of Ghazālī’s Iḥyā‘, ‘ulūm al-dīn, the Risāla of Qushayrī, the Luma‘ of Sarrāj, and finally, in four volumes, the Qūt al-qlūb of Abū Tālim al-Makki. Except for the ‘Awārif al-ma‘ārif, the translations are all accompanied by a critical apparatus, as well as a commentary which chiefly notes textual parallels and additional examples. Whoever wishes to work on Sufism today can hardly do so without these tools provided by Gramlich. His most recent publication is a two-volume study which focuses on the early Sufi masters, including portraits of Abū Bakr al-Shibli and Abū Bakr al-Wāsītī, among others. Besides numerous smaller studies, one must mention another large-scale work, Die Wunder der Freunde Gottes, in which both theory and practice of the miracles of saints are dealt with.
INTRODUCTION

For several decades before his death Meier was esteemed by many to be the most accomplished scholar in the German-speaking world who dealt with Islamic Persian and Sufism in its Persian and Arabic manifestations. The number of productive academics working in the field of Sufism who were his students stands as a testimony to his capacity to inspire others and transmit high standards of scholarship. Yet the fact that he wrote in German and that his writings possess a characteristic compactness which makes it difficult for the hasty reader to assess them adequately, accounts perhaps for Meier's work having had less influence than it might have had. Today his philological approach may seem old-fashioned to some, whereas for Meier philology was a fundamental hermeneutic tool for transposing ideas, experiences and sensibilities from one culture to another. By contrast, he had reservations regarding some more recent sociological and economic methodologies which neglect linguistic competence and familiarity with primary sources, but elaborate an understanding on the basis of a broader abstract cultural-anthropological theory.

In what follows I would like to offer a minimal outline of the essays translated in this volume. I stress the word 'minimal' because Meier's normal working method is to present a showcase of evidence from primary sources and to accompany this with wide-ranging comparisons and nuanced interpretation. And although each essay focuses on a precise subject or traces a particular development, Meier frequently adds remarks and judgements which go further afield, especially on matters to do with Sufism. This makes it difficult to paraphrase his work without betraying its special distinctive qualities. My purpose has not been to attempt to evaluate the significance of Meier's contribution to Oriental studies — a task which is beyond my competence — but simply to give the reader a rough idea of what subjects are dealt with in each essay.

'The Dervish Dance: An Attempt at an Overview': This essay is divided into five sections and traces the relationship between dhikr and samā'. Section 1) considers the Islamic theological concept of God's absolute transcendence, in connection with the Sufi view that man can attain higher perception of God. Performing dhikr on spiritual retreat by repeating the formula lā ilāha illa'llāh constitutes recollection of God or a means of experienc-
ing spiritual essences. But Sufis recognize the need for God’s help to advance beyond themselves.

2) By way of following the Koranic injunction ‘to recollect God’ at all times, Sufis place *dhikr* at the center of their communal exercises. *Dhikr al-waqt* or *dhikr al-awqāt* is a group performance of *dhikr* after ritual prayer. This is to be distinguished from *dhikr al-ḥadra* ‘assembly-dhikr’ which only occurs from time to time and on a larger scale. Modern forms of the latter can involve intense body movements, the goal being to induce a form of dislocation of consciousness or ecstasy.

3) A second kind of ecstasy, not actively induced, was conceived of as being triggered by something outside a person: by a beautiful face, a word or a line of poetry. Music could also have this effect. Examples of suddenly triggered ecstatic states are discussed. Christian parallels are considered, but a fundamental difference between the Christians and the Sufis was that the latter would assemble communally to induce such states. Some rules regarding the dance which accompanied *samā‘* are discussed, as well as anticipatory mimicking of ecstatic states (*tawājud*) and the practice of casting off items of clothing in ecstasy. Differences between *dhikr* and *samā‘* are considered: in *dhikr* a person invokes his own forces, in *samā‘* he waits; in the one he speaks, in the other he listens; *dhikr* is an indispensable part of the Sufi curriculum and work routine, *samā‘* is almost always a concession (*rukhsa*) performed in the context of entertainment and was combated by many as a malignant growth on Sufism. Both could induce ecstatic states.

4) Whereas dance had originally been an expression of ecstasy, Meier describes two cases in which dance served as a form of *tawājud* to induce ecstasy: the Mawlawīs, founded in the 13th century by Jalāl al-Dīn-i Rūmī, and the Ḥisawīs of North Africa and Egypt, founded in the 16th century.

5) Meier sketches a process which led to the combination of *dhikr* and *samā‘*, and gives examples of particular hybrids which resulted. In closing, he describes in detail the separate segments of the combined performance of *dhikr* and *samā‘* by the Ḍayfīs which he witnessed himself in Alexandria in 1948. Other Sufi brotherhoods which regularly employed this form of combination are mentioned.

‘A Book of Etiquette for Sufis’: The main section of this essay presents a close paraphrase of the contents of the *Adāb al-
murīdīn, a small handbook for Sufis about correct behavior, written in Persian sometime after 1184 by Najm al-Dīn-i Kubrā. In his sizeable introduction, however, Meier first reviews the bewildering plethora of meanings which had developed around the word *adab*/pl. *ādāb*. In the context of Sufism the term signifies the specific customs, practices and correct mode of behavior of a Sufi. In much the same way that *regulae, constitutiones* and *consuetudines* eventually dominated life within the Christian monastic orders, the whole of Sufism came to be conceived of as regulated by *ādāb*. Meier considers the stages of this development and previous Sufi works which dealt with the subject of *ādāb*.

Sulami’s earlier work *Ādāb al-ṣuhba wa-husn al-‘ishra*, for instance, derives its *ādāb* governing social behavior from the *sunna* of the Prophet and is intended for all Muslims, whereas Kubrā takes for granted a long-established Sufi tradition and addresses himself exclusively to Sufis. On the other hand, Abū’l-Najib al-Suhrawardi’s *Ādāb al-muridīn* in Arabic is a comprehensive presentation of Sufism from the viewpoint of *ādāb*, while Kubrā’s smaller work focuses on the restricted area of social intercourse and duties regarding decency, i.e. on the outward, not the inward, rules of behavior. Typical in this respect is Kubrā’s attention to the symbolic meaning of the special clothing worn by Sufis.


‘Qushayri’s *Tartīb al-sulūk*’: Meier refers to Ibn ābād al-Rundi’s observation in the 14th century that a shift from the *shaykh al-ta’lim* ‘the lecture-giving shaykh’ to the *shaykh al-tarbīya* ‘the shaykh in charge of training’ took place sometime between the end of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century. This important transformation is the subject of Meier’s later essay ‘Khurasan and the End of Classical Sufism’. Qushayri belongs to the period when this shift had set in and a shaykh demands absolute obedience from the novice and initiates him by ‘implanting’ the formula for recollecting God (*dhikr*). *Dhikr* is one of the most important means a mystic possesses for eliminating decisions of the ‘self’ and drawing closer to God. Associated with spiritual
training in the new era is discussion of the occult phenomena which a novice experiences when performing *dhikr* in spiritual retreat.

Qushayri’s work *The Gradation of Travelling on the Path to God* is a short monograph which provides our earliest evidence of a Sufi shaykh’s explanations to do with the rules and effects of *dhikr*, as well as the pitfalls the novice must seek to avoid. Particular postures or techniques to be adopted in performing *dhikr* are not mentioned. Meier discusses some contradictions in the work, as well as problems concerning its authorship and manner of composition, and concludes that the text may have been compiled by a student on the basis of Qushayri’s oral teachings.

Meier then paraphrases the contents of the work, which he has divided into 9 sections, and comments on its salient features. Recollection of God moves from the tongue to the heart and then into the so-called ‘secret’. The student must forget all things, including himself and his recollection of God. Above all, the psychic phenomena he experiences must not distract him. He sees himself grow and expand, he suffers convulsions, he hears strange voices and experiences an extraordinary sweet taste. He believes he can hear ants when they walk. He yearns to be able to sleep.

The mystic’s relation to his ‘secret’ is described. He must avoid falling into the state of *jamʿ al-jamʿ* ‘the union of union’ which overwhelmed Ḥallāj and Bistāmi. The devil has strategies for intervening. Mystic states, like a bird, only descend on a human being who remains motionless like a dead person. Qushayri concludes with some examples of his own psychic difficulties and how he overcame them with the help of a friend. When his recollection of God finally moved into his ‘secret’, the experience was so intense he was reduced to skin and bones in the course of one day.

After a detailed paraphrase and commentary Meier provides an edition of the Arabic text, followed by a translation.

‘An Important Manuscript Find for Sufism*: Here Meier describes and analyzes the contents of an Arabic collective manuscript, no. 87 belonging to the Khānaqāḥ-i Aḥmādī in Shīrāz. It was first briefly described by Īraj-i Afshār in 1965. Eight of the thirteen texts contained in the MS are unique. These include important verses by Ḥallāj not found in Massignon’s *Diwān al-Ḥallāj* and
five new works by Abū Manaṣir Maʿmar al-Isfahānī, a con-
temporary and fellow townsman of Abū Nuʿaym al-Isfahānī,
about whom relatively little was otherwise known.

The most significant text of the collective MS is an anonymous
work entitled Adab al-mulūk which has since been edited by
Bernd Radtke and translated into German by Richard Gramlich.
This is a compact but comprehensive handbook of Sufism from
the 10th or 11th century, offering a parallel with Kalābādhi’s
Taʿarruf and Sarrāj’s Luma. Meier discusses the book’s value for
the study of Sufism, its contents and possible authorship.

Then there is a short collection of Sufi maxims, poems and sto-
ries, attributed to Sulamī. This is followed by ninety-four sayings
by or about Shāfiʿī with relevance for Sufism, which Sulamī col-
lected. Meier translates this text and considers other collections of
Shāfiʿī’s sayings and his ambiguous attitude toward Sufism. In
Shāfiʿī’s day Sufism was still at an early stage of development
(prior to so-called classical Sufism). Expanding on his comments
on Shāfiʿī, Meier proceeds to give a sweeping interpretive over-
view of Sufism’s subsequent development which concludes with
special emphasis on the value of Sulamī as a source and an appeal
for a critical edition of Sulamī’s Koran commentary.

‘Khurāsān and the End of Classical Sufism’: Meier begins by
specifying some important features of Sufism which have
changed over the centuries. He then sets out to investigate the
transformation of the shaykh al-taʿlim ‘the lecture-giving shaykh’
into the shaykh al-tarbiya, the Sufi master who becomes closely
involved in training a disciple to be a spiritual adept. Meier notes
that it was Ibn ʿAbbad al-Rundi (d. 1390) who first pointed out
this transformation and located its occurrence in the 11th century.
A comparison of an early Sufi textbook like Sarrāj’s Luma with
the ʿAwārif al-maʿārif of Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardi (d.
1234) clearly reveals that a shift in this direction did take place.

Firstly, evidence from the 9th and 10th centuries regarding the
shaykh al-taʿlim is reviewed. Although training is already attested
in the 10th century in Sarrāj’s Luma, as well as in the Asrar al-
Tawḥīd (the life of shaykh Abū Saʿīd b. Abīl-Khayr; 967-1049),
by the 11th century it had acquired a new status. Aspects of
training were by then dealt with in theoretical discussions and
regulations in Sufi systems. The gap in status between the shaykh
and the novice widened. The pact between the shaykh and the
novice imposed absolute obedience on the latter, and the novitiate
became an initiation, not into a Sufi order — orders only developed later — but into a particular silsila or ‘spiritual family tree’. Sufi shaykhs claimed to be the heirs to the Prophet. Further concepts which played a role in augmenting the authority of the shaykh are considered.

Thanks to surviving evidence, we are in a position to observe the transformation of the Sufi shaykh in Nayshabūr from the 9th to the 11th century. Meier proceeds to give a detailed analysis of the shift in attitude towards tarbiya among the following series of important Nayshābūrī shaykhs: Abū Ḥafs al-Ḥaddād al-Nayshābūrī (d. circa 880), Abū ʿUthmān al-Ḥirī (d. 910), Abū ʿAlī al-Ṭhaqāfī (d. 940), Abū Sahl al-Ṣuʿūlīkī (d. 980), Sulāmī (d. 1021), and finally Abū ʿAlī al-Daqqāq (d. 1015) and Qushayrī (d. 1072).

Developments in Nayshābūr reflect a more widespread trend, though Nayshābūr played a leading role in shaping that trend. The influential writings of Sulāmī and Qushayrī guaranteed the future authority of the Nayshābūrī model. Our limited knowledge of the Malāmatiyya movement and the ahl al-futuwwa is discussed in relation to Sufism. Qushayrī is the pivotal figure in the transition from classical Sufism with the predominance of the shaykh al-taʿlim to the post-classical period and the shaykh al-tarbiya. Meier closes with some remarks on the general significance of this change and the later dissemination of ideas about the shaykh al-tarbiya.

‘A Saying of the Prophet against Mourning the Dead’: Muḥammad forbade lamenting over the dead but it was difficult to suppress this deep-rooted pre-Islamic custom. There is a difference between lamenting (niyāḥanawḥ) and weeping (bukā'). Canonical hadiths express contradictory attitudes towards weeping. In this essay Meier examines the problems of interpretation which arose concerning variants of the hadith: ‘The dead atones for the weeping of his relatives over him.’ Many took this to mean that the dead is punished for the weeping of his relatives, but in Islam one cannot be held responsible for the sins of others.

ʿAʾīsha rejected the hadith’s authenticity. Ibn Qutayba’s explanation in its defense is described. Or does the hadith only refer to someone who has ordered lamentation on his own behalf? But in our context the verb yuʿadhdiḥu bi- (‘atones for’ or ‘is punished for’) can also mean ‘is tormented by’ or ‘suffers because of’ his relatives’ weeping. Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī
(d. 923) understood the \textit{hadith} this way, i.e. \textit{adhåb} is taken to mean ‘pain’ rather than ‘punishment’.

A Zoroastrian myth maintains that the deceased must cross over a river and that this may be made difficult by the tears of the living which cause the river to swell. Meier translates pertinent sections from two Neo-Persian versifications of the Zoroastrian \textit{Ardâ-Wirâz-nâmag}: one by Zartusht-i Bahram-i Pazhdû in the 13th century, the other being an anonymous version written in 1532. He then considers evidence on prohibiting lamentation from Mandaean and Coptic sources. The question is raised as to whether the idea of the dead being tormented by weeping was adopted in Islam from the Iranians, as with the case of the \textit{Chinwât-Bridge}.

In conclusion Meier reviews an array of beliefs about the effect of tears on the dead from other peoples around the world. His examples are taken from such wide-ranging contexts as Graeco-Roman antiquity, German folklore, Sanskrit literature and Eskimo myths.

\textit{‘An Exchange of Letters between Sharaf al-Dîn-i Balkhî and Majd al-Dîn-i Baghdâdî’}: Whereas nothing is known about Balkhî, shaykh Majd al-Dîn-i Baghdâdî (d. 1219) was a disciple of Najm al-Dîn-i Kubrâ (d. 1221). Meier notes that only in Sufism’s post-classical period, i.e. after Qushayrî (d. 1072), did letters form part of a novice’s training by providing interpretations of dreams and visions. The latter had come to be taken seriously as a source for understanding the novice’s inner state. For instance, the \textit{Manâqib-i Awhad al-Dîn-i Kirmânî} (d. 1238) portrays the master every morning discussing the nocturnal experiences of the novice. Kubrâ attached great importance to visionary experience. Meier refers to Kubrâ’s advice by letter to Sayf al-Dîn-i Bâkharzî (d. 1260 or 1261), as well as the letters between \textacute{\textcopyright}Alâ\textthree₇ al-Dawla-i Simnânî and his teacher Nûr al-Dîn-i Kasîrqi (d. 1317).

Meier proceeds to give a close paraphrase of Balkhî’s letter to Baghdâdî. The visions Balkhî has had involve demon spirits (\textit{jinn}) who pose a dilemma concerning saying ‘There is no god but God’ while one’s ego still remains. Balkhî witnesses terrifying animals and a huge snake burst forth from a smoking well shaft. Later he perceives beautiful forms and sounds, and a state of rapture comes over him. Many details of what he sees suggest al-
legorical meanings. In a final vision an old wise man appears who gives spiritual advice to Baghdādī as well as Balkhī.

Meier next paraphrases Baghdādī’s reply. Here all the main features of Balkhī’s visions are meticulously interpreted and accompanied by spiritual advice. For instance, the old man of the final vision is identified as probably being the demon shaykh ġAbd al-Rahmān who was a close disciple of the Prophet. The well shaft represents the heart, the connecting tract between the material and the supernatural world. While the senses prevail, the heart is filled with reprehensible qualities. These are the animals Balkhī saw, etc. And Baghdādī comments on the correct way to perform the all-important Sufi practice of dhikr, which involves reciting the formula ‘There is no god but God’. In closing Baghdādī recommends attaching oneself to human teachers instead of demons, since demons have no experience of the barriers separating man from God.

Meier follows these paraphrases with his own interesting comments on all the points dealt with in the letters, e.g. earlier views about the dilemma associated with the tahlil, numerous other occasions when demons have taught human beings, and the theme of a person being absent from the recollection of God while re-collecting God. Finally, Meier provides an edition of the Persian text.

‘The Şumādiyya: A Branch Order of the Qādiriyya in Damascus’: This essay is divided into three sections. In section 1) Meier examines the extant historical evidence relating to the Şumādiyya, a suborder of the Qādiriyya, which was founded in the Syrian village of Şumād but moved its headquarters to Damascus by the end of the 15th century. The Şumādi family claims descent from a direct disciple of ġAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (d. 1166), as well as from a daughter of Jilānī. Meier presents what is known from Arabic sources about the family’s role in society and politics, particularly their relations with other prominent families in Damascus and the Ottoman government. While describing the successive heads of the Şumādi family, Meier makes numerous illuminating comments about the decentralized organization and different family branches of the Qādiriyya order. By around 1800 the family begins to disintegrate, in part due to internal splits over leadership. At the end of section 1) a detailed genealogical family tree is provided.
Section 2) discusses the prominence accorded to drum playing in the Şumâdiyya’s *dhikr*- and *samâ’*-performances. According to legend a particular drum possessed by the family had been beaten at the capture of Acre from the Crusaders. Meier considers the chronological problems raised by the legend and which capture of Acre may have been intended (1187 or 1291). Miracles associated with the famous drum are described. The legend of the drum is also discussed in terms of hagiographical strategies found in other sources. The Şumâdiyya regularly beat drums at night in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. There were opponents and supporters of religious uses of drumming.

Section 3) considers the positive spiritual effects of drum playing. Drums instill awe and respect (*muhibba*), a sense of gravity and intimacy (*waqâr* and *uns*) and inspire the desire to set out on the inner path of ‘greater holy war’. The Kâzârûniyya’s military music is a form of music associated with a royal residence and has nothing to do with *dhikr*- or *samâ’*-performances. The courtly orchestra attached to the tomb of Imam ʿAli Rîdâ (d. 818) in Mashhad consists of trumpets accompanied by drums and plays in honor of the Imam and by way of invoking blessings on him. Of these three different kinds of military music only that of the Şumâdiyya is intended to induce ecstasy.

‘The Cleanest about Predestination: A Bit of Ibn Taymiyya’: This essay falls into three sections. Section 1), by way of introduction, characterizes Ibn Taymiyya’s ‘fundamentalist’ thought. The Prophet Muhammad is dead and until the Resurrection cannot intervene on our behalf with God, and certainly ‘saints’, whether living or dead, have no such power. We cannot know God through our own efforts. Everything we need to know about religion and how to live is contained in the Koran and the *sunna*. Nor is there a path to God through philosophical speculation, or through self-purification and self-abnegation. And exaggerated religious devotions are not required.

Section 2) elaborates these points with relation to the Sufis. Sufis give too much importance to experience and exceptional states: visions, dreams, inspirations, etc. But these are never as binding as the Koran and the *sunna*. Ibn Taymiyya views contemporary miracles as charlatanism or of satanic origin. In addition, the Sufis tend to be indifferent to the commands and prohibitions of religion, maintaining that whatever happens is the will of God. For instance Ibn ʿAtâʾallâh al-Sikandârî, a
spokesman at that time for the Shadhiliyya in Egypt, emphasized contentment (ridâ) above love and advocated dropping all planning (isqât al-tadbîr). The Sufi approach, in this respect, is one-sided. God has two wills. The one is designated as kawnî ‘existential’ and determines everything that happens. The other is dînî ‘religious’ and refers to what should and should not be done. This is an old distinction previously described as irâda (God’s will) and amr (His command). Sufis overemphasize predestination or God’s existential will. It is especially reprehensible to argue against the divine commands by invoking predestination.

Section 3), the central part of the essay, is a detailed exposition of Ibn Taymiyya’s nuanced and consistent thought about man’s dilemma and man’s duties in view of God’s two forms of will. Man has no way of dealing with predestination but must render obedience and do battle in the field of divine commands and prohibitions. Meier translates an excerpt from Ibn Taymiyya’s Marâṭîb al-irâda which clarifies the different categories and subtle workings of God’s will.

‘Almoravids and Marabouts’: This is the largest and most densely documented of the essays here presented, and consists of four sections. Section 1), subtitled ‘Ribât and murâbata’, examines the Islamic institution of the frontier guard who, on a voluntary basis, detaches himself from his tribe and family to man a fort (ribât) against infidel invaders. Besides performing a purely military activity, those who undertake murâbata (the šâlihûn and murâbitûn) also engage in religious devotions and cultivate a sense of piety.

Section 2) ‘Murâbit and marabout’ considers how the later meaning of marabout, ‘holy man’, evolved out of the meaning of murâbiṭ as a frontier guard. This development was peculiar to North Africa and Spain, whereas ribâṭ in the East came exclusively to mean a civilian hospice for lodging. In the Arabic vernacular in the west murâbiṭ comes to signify a man of piety who acts as a mediator in disputes or between the common people and the government. His family and descendants retain a sanctified status in the community and up to modern times have often played a decisive role in dynastic politics.

In section 3) ‘Al-murâbitûn and the Almoravids’, early Arabic historians who deal with the beginnings of the Almoravid movement of the 11th century are examined in light of the different
meanings of *murābaṭa* in an attempt to make better sense of the unresolved contradictions in the sources. The interpretations of leading European and Moroccan historians (Huici, Norris, Levtzion, Labbadie, etc.) are weighed against the historical evidence and religious significance of the term *murābiṭ*. In this context *murābiṭ* designates a particular people, i.e. a group of Berber tribes (at the head of which stands the Lamtūna) who were originally adherents and then fighting ‘comrades’ of Ibn Yāsin. In summing up, the full range of differences between a *murābiṭ* as a holy man and an Almoravid are reviewed.

Finally, section 4) ‘Those who veil their mouth...’ treats the subject of the origins and function of wearing a veil over the mouth, which was a distinctive custom of the Almoravids — so much so that their 12th-century rivals the Almohads strongly condemned the practice. A range of studies by European ethnographers is considered, as well as various ideas about the veil found in early Arabic historical and geographical literature.

‘Ṭahir al-Šafadi’s Forgotten Work on Western Saints of the 6th/12th Century’: This essay begins by reviewing the early Arabic sources describing pious Muslims and miracle-workers in the west of North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula, the earliest of which date from the 13th century. But there is a 12th-century work on this subject, composed sometime before the death of Abū Ya‘azzā (1177) which has hitherto been neglected. Meier then proceeds to give a paraphrase of the accounts about saints, ascetics and religious scholars found in *Al-sīr al-mašā’in* by Tāhīr al-Šadafi. This is a sizeable fragment preserved in al-Bārizī’s *Tawthīq urū‘l-imān fi tafḍīl ḥabīb al-raḥmān*. Ṣadafi’s book might rightly be described as a ‘hagiographical journal’ (*kunnāšh/kunnāšha*). It covers Spain, Morocco, Egypt and the Ḥijāz, though with a preponderance of persons from the west. All the individuals described are contemporaries of Ṣadafi whom he met personally or heard about. Except for Abū Ya‘azzā and ʿAbd al-Malik b. Masarra, the persons described are not famous saints or men of learning. These are naive, credulous reports, edifying fantasies which stress the miraculous. For all their intellectual modesty, however, they enrich our knowledge of hagiographical motifs and acquaint us with persons of the 12th century unknown from other sources.

The work falls into five sections. Section 1) describes theologians (‘ulamā’), jurists (fuqahā’i) and Friends of God (awliyā’i)
whom Ṣadafī met in the Maghreb (Morocco and Spain); section 2) deals with pious worshippers of God (‘ubād) and ascetics (zuḥhād) in the same region; section 3) with the same category of people he had not met but only heard about; section 4) with theologians, ascetics and men of education (fuḍālā‘) he met or heard about in Egypt; and section 5) describes persons he encountered in the Hijāz. Meier’s accompanying notes are copious and provide the reader with interesting comparisons and a wide range of pertinent bibliographical references.

‘A Resurrection of Muḥammad in Suyūṭī’: Meier begins by reviewing early ideas about Muḥammad’s status and whereabouts after death. More popular views, in distinction to those later held by Ibn Taymiyya and the Wahhābis, claimed that Muḥammad had died and his corpse was in Medina but that he is alive in his grave and, as in the case of the other prophets, his spirit (rūḥ) is free to move about and participate in the world. Evidence from tombstone inscriptions is referred to and parallels with Jesus (who in the Muslim view did not die but was translated to heaven) are taken into account. Likewise, ideas about the Prophet’s ubiquity and multilocation on the part of Friends of God are considered.

The main focus of the essay, however, is the concept of Muḥammad’s continued life after death which is sketched in two works by Suyūṭī (1445-1505): the Inbāh al-adhkiyā’ fi ḥayāt al-anbiyā’ and the Tanwir al-halak fi imkān ru’yat al-nabi wa’l-malak. Suyūṭī’s view combines the incorruptibility of the Prophet’s body and his body’s revival by his surviving spirit. Hence the Prophet lives on in flesh and blood after death. He moves about feely and travels wherever he wishes on earth and in the supernatural realm (malakūt). He looks as he did in life but is only visible to those whom God has given special grace.

Ibn ʿArabī held that seeing Muḥammad after the latter’s death made one a Companion of the Prophet. This attitude was shared by the two founders of Sufi orders, Ahmad al-Tijānī (d. 1815) and Muḥammad al-Sanūsī (d. 1859). Tijānī, for instance, claimed to have met the Prophet and been initiated by him and thus to have become a Companion himself. Other later figures who were influenced by Suyūṭī are discussed: Muḥammad al-Filāhi, al-Hājj ʿUmar Tal (founder of a Tijānī state on the upper Niger), etc. The Salafi-Wahhābī view, based on sound hadīths, accepts that the Prophet lives on in his grave — but only in his grave. He does not move about in the world.
‘Invoking Blessings on Muhammad in Prayers of Supplication and When Making Requests’: This essay presents a broad spectrum of uses of the *tasliya* ‘invoking blessings on Muhammad’ and speculates as to their origin and meaning. It is divided into four sections:

1) In prayers of supplication (*du‘ā*), repeated at the beginning, middle and end, or sometimes only at the beginning: Hadiths and other pious sayings supporting this use are cited. Ibn Taymiyya approved of the *tasliya* in preference to formulas of conjuration. Evidence from inscriptions on wood and stone are reviewed. Uses of the *tasliya* to overcome adversity are noted. Repeating the *tasliya* hundreds of times is meant to ‘coerce heaven’, and great benefits are to be had by reciting the *tasliya* without any specific request. Hence it is recommended to read through Jazuli’s *Dalā‘il al-khayrāt* (a collection of different forms of *tasliyat*) forty times in forty days. One will also benefit from dedicating to the Prophet all the reward for saying the *tasliya*.

2) Against the plague: Meier examines a work by Aḥmad b. Abī Ḥajala (d. 1375) who argues in favor of using the *tasliya* for protection against the plague. This author mentions all the cases of plague he knew about in the Islamic world before the plague of 1364 and describes the religious measures taken against the black death in 1348 which he witnessed himself in Damascus. Maqrizi’s supplementary evidence about plague is discussed, as well as a work by Bayluni (d. 1632-33) which gives different remedies against plague including the *tasliya*. But the *tasliya* was not universally adopted as a measure against plague as Ibn Abī Ḥajala had wanted. It remained in the background only to be used occasionally in emergencies.

3) When making a request: Early on the *tasliya* was used when requesting something from a human being. It functioned as a form of conjuration. The person addressed is called upon to invoke blessings on the Prophet. Oldest known examples are considered, for instance the clever way the poet Abū Dulāma used the *tasliya* in a request he made to the caliph al-Mahdī (d. 785).

4) As an order to be silent: The *tasliya* can still be used today in an attempt to settle a dispute but as a practice it goes very far back. It is referred to in early juridical discussions in connection with blasphemy, e.g. by Saḥnūn (d. 854). Recent and old examples are examined. In closing, Meier considers possible explanations for the origin of the *tasliya* of appeasement, as well as the
tasliya used before making a declaration or an intimate communication.

‘The Priority of Faith or Thinking Well of Others over a Concern for Truth among Muslims’: The intellectual and practical implications of the complex of ideas associated with husn al-zann and i’tiqād are investigated in a rich variety of contexts. One is impressed by the diversity of situations in which this fundamental Islamic concept turns up. Meier’s wide-ranging familiarity with primary source materials permits him to pursue his subject in eight separate areas: 1) thinking well of God, 2) of the Prophet Muḥammad, 3) of Ālids and descendants of the Prophet’s Companions, 4) of deeply-rooted religious practices and customs, 5) of religious authorities, 6) of one’s Sufi instructor, 7) Muslims’ thinking well of one another, and 8) favorable or unfavorable thought as a magic power.

The hadith qudsi: ‘I (God) am as My bondsman thinks of Me’ has been variously interpreted in Islam to explain the virtue and benefits of having trust in God, as well as the kinds of power resulting from firm belief. Meier provides concrete examples of how husn al-zann requires Muslims to show respect for God, the Prophet, Ālids, holy men and their alleged graves, Sufi shaykhs, and fellow Muslims. The way faith can heighten the efficacy of supplicatory prayer, even among non-Muslims, is also considered. Finally, four categories of magical power are examined in connection with thinking well or badly about a person. These include the psychic powers of the Friend of God, i.e. his himma ‘effective power’, tasarruf ‘power of disposal’ and najār ‘gaze’, as well as tawājud ‘anticipatory mimicking’ of rapture as a means of inducing real states of ecstasy.

‘Poetic Refrain and Maḥyā’: This essay opens with a description of the panegyrical poems in praise of the Prophet which form the conclusion to the large work by Ahmad al-Maqqari al-Tilimsānī (d. 1631): Naḥḥ al-ṭib min ghusn al-Andalus al-raṭīb wa-dhikr waẓīrīhā Līsān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb. Meier analyzes the strophic structure and rhyme schemes of the poems and in particular their use of the tasliya, i.e. invoking blessings on the Prophet. He conjectures that this voluminous appendix of Maqqari’s serves as one long tasliya by way of concluding his book. Meier then asks whether poems with a tasliya refrain might have been used in what later came to be known as a maḥyā-performance, i.e. com-
munal recitation of blessings on the Prophet. The importance of the *Dalā‘īl al-khayrāt* of Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Jazūlī (d. 1465), a very popular collection of *ṭaṣliyāt* formulas, is discussed, as well as the later, more elaborate collection by Ibn ʿAẓẓūm (d. 1553), the *Tanbīh al-anām*.

But it was Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī al-Shūnī (d. 1537-38) who created the *maḥyā* for invoking blessings on the Prophet and in 1492 established its performance in Cairo in al-Azhar. His student Ṣaʿrānī notes in 1542 that Shūnī’s *maḥyā* had spread to Alexandria, Upper-Egypt, the Ḥijāz, Syria, North Africa and Senegal. In 1563-64 ʿAbd al-Qādir al-ʿĀtkī performed what was now formally designated *laylat al-maḥyā* in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Further developments in gatherings for communal reciting of *ṭaṣliyāt* are considered and the relationship of the Shūnī-type *maḥyā* and the Sufi ḥadra is examined. The former gives emphasis to large numbers of repetition to induce God to be good to the Prophet. In conclusion Meier speculates on whether poems with *ṭaṣliya* refrains such as those cited by Maqqarī might have been used in a *maḥyā*-performance.